3 Findings

This chapter summarizes the major results of work already completed. Most of these results represent analyses carried out recently by CARB staff. The findings presented here are generally isolated results. More integrated "conclusions" are presented in the following chapter.

The findings outlined below primarily address the South Coast Air Basin, where ambient ozone concentrations are the highest in the state and the monitoring network is the most extensive in California. Additional air basins in California are included in some findings regarding measurements of ambient air quality on weekdays and weekends.

Finding #1: The available data are sufficient to identify and quantify the ozone weekend effect, but the data are not sufficient to determine its cause(s).

Although many interesting findings emerged from the analyses in this report, the cause(s) of the ozone weekend effect could not be determined. Multiple hypotheses are plausible and the data needed to separate and quantify their effects individually are not available.

Finding #2: The ozone weekend effect has differences and similarities in different areas of California

Analyses of ozone data during the 1990's considered four areas of California – the South Coast Air Basin, the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin, the Sacramento Metropolitan area, and the San Joaquin Valley. The results reveal the following:

- **The day-of-week effects vary from area to area.**

Table 3.1. Weekend effects for three regions – average result for sites in each region based on ozone data for 1996 through 1998.

Region	Sites Used	Friday to Saturday	Saturday to Sunday	Sunday to Monday
South Coast	18	Up 19%	Up 11%	Down 22%
S.F. Bay Area	18	Up 15%	Up 10%	Down 12%
Sacramento Metro.	7	Up 4%	Up 4%	Up 1%
San Joaquin Valley	28	Up 4%	Down 1%	Down 3%

- **In three of the four areas, ozone levels improved significantly on both weekends and weekdays during the 1990's. In the San Joaquin Valley, however, no significant changes in ozone occurred.**

Table 3.2. Improvements for three regions – change in average results for sites in each region based on ozone data for 1992-1994 versus 1996-1998.

Region	Sites Used	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
South Coast	18	Down 25%*	Down 25%	Down 16%	Down 22%
S.F. Bay Area	18	Down 18%	Down 18%	Down 8%	Down 7%
Sacramento	7	Down 11%	Down 15%	Down 7%	Down 6%
San Joaquin Valley	22	No Change	No Change	Up 2%	Up 2%

* Percent of the 1992-1994 baseline value

- **Day-of-week comparisons are relatively free of uncertainty due to meteorology. Otherwise, the weather would have to be systematically and substantially different for "Mondays," for example, compared to "Tuesdays" within the same year(s).**

Finding #3: The ozone weekend effect is not static, but changes with time

Results from the analysis of ozone from 1990 to 1998 in the South Coast Air Basin, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Sacramento Area found:

- **In all three areas, a "Sunday effect" emerged; average ozone on Sunday in each region shifted from <u>less</u> than Saturday in the early 1990's to <u>greater</u> than Saturday in the late 1990's. The shift was about 10 percent of the Saturday ozone value in all three areas.**

- **In all three areas, the "Saturday effect" continued, with average Saturday ozone being greater than Friday. In contrast to the large shift in the Sunday effect, the Saturday effect was almost unchanged.**

Long-term trends from 1980 to 1998 for 17 locations in the South Coast Air Basin found:

- **Ozone air quality improved throughout the basin.**

- **Different parts of the South Coast Air Basin improved at different rates (Table 3.3).**

- **Weekdays improved faster than weekends (Table 3.3).**

Table 3.3. Improvements in ozone air quality on weekdays and weekends in different sub-regions of the SoCAB (1980/82 vs.1996/98 data)

Sub-Region	Sites Used	Weekdays*	Weekends*	Difference**
All sites	17	Down 46 %	Down 33 %	13 points
Southwest L.A. County	4	Down 46 %	Down 34 %	12 points
San Gabriel Valley	3	Down 55 %	Down 36 %	19 points
San Fernando Valley	2	Down 49 %	Down 43 %	6 points
Orange County	3	Down 43 %	Down 26 %	17 points
San Bernardino/Riverside	5	Down 42 %	Down 31 %	11 points

* Percent of respective 1980/82 baseline values.
* Difference of the weekday and weekend rates in terms of percentage "points".

Extending trends back to the 1970's showed:

- **In the 1970's, ozone in the South Coast Air Basin was highest on Sunday only at coastal sites, but ozone is now highest on Sunday throughout the basin.**

Finding #4: The ozone weekend effect tends to diminish at downwind locations

Results from the analysis of ozone during the 1990's in the South Coast Air Basin, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Sacramento Area found:

- **In regions with significant weekend effects, the weekend effects tend to be greater in urban centers and smaller at downwind receptors. The downwind receptors tend to have the highest regional ozone concentrations.**

- **In the South Coast Air Basin, Sunday ozone averaged 35% higher than Friday in the urban core but only 13% higher at Santa Clarita and Lake Gregory. These sites are far "downwind" and at higher elevation than most sites in the basin.**

- **In the S.F. Bay Area Air Basin, Sunday ozone averaged 30% higher than Friday in the urban core but only 14% higher at Bethel Island, Fairfield, Gilroy, and Livermore. These sites are downwind receptors but are not considered "elevated" sites.**

Finding #5: The ozone weekend effect in the South Coast Air Basin is smaller on days with high ozone-forming potential (based on meteorological conditions) compared to days when ozone-formation potential is moderate

Some days have meteorological conditions conducive to high ozone concentrations while other days do not. In the South Coast Air Basin, days with high barometric pressure and high surface temperatures tend to have high ozone concentrations somewhere in the basin.

A statistical model was developed to relate the highest ozone in the basin on a given day to selected meteorological parameters for the same day. Based on data from 1992 through 1994, this model was calibrated to produce "meteorologically standardized" ozone concentrations. Days with meteorological data that produce similar met-standardized ozone values are considered to have similar ozone-forming potential. Weekdays and weekend days with high and with moderate ozone-forming potential were compared to each other.

- **The average maximum ozone on days with "moderate" ozone-forming potential was approximately 120 ppb in 1996.**

- **The average maximum ozone on days with "high" ozone-forming potential was approximately 150 ppb in 1996.**

Based on data from 1992-1994:

- **Saturday ozone was greater than Friday ozone by 9 ppb when ozone forming potential was high but 29 ppb greater when ozone forming potential was moderate.**

- **Weekend average ozone was greater than weekday average ozone by 9 ppb when ozone forming potential was high but 23 ppb greater when ozone forming potential was moderate.**

Based on data from 1996-1998:

- **Saturday ozone was greater than Friday ozone by 16 ppb when ozone forming potential was high but 21 ppb greater when ozone forming potential was moderate.**

- **Weekend average ozone was greater than weekday average ozone by 9 ppb when ozone forming potential was high but 23 ppb greater when ozone forming potential was moderate.**

During both 1992-1994 and 1996-1998:

- **Weekend ozone was about the same as Thursday** (the weekday with the highest ozone) **when ozone forming potential was high, but weekend ozone was substantially higher than Thursday ozone when ozone-forming potential was moderate.**

Finding #6: Ozone and other pollutants carryover aloft and can affect ground level concentrations on the following day

Measurements of pollutants aloft are very limited but some useful findings follow from selected field studies.

A surface-based LIDAR instrument was installed at El Monte during the SCOS97 field study. The LIDAR was provided and operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Pollutants aloft were also measured periodically during SCOS97 using an airplane (Sonoma Technology, Inc.) and balloon-borne instruments (University of Southern California).

Results of these programs reveal the following:

- **Significant layers of polluted air aloft may be the norm rather than the exception in the South Coast Air Basin, particularly on days with meteorological conditions that favor high ozone concentrations.**

- **Significant layers of polluted air aloft may persist for more than one day.**

- **Layers of polluted air aloft can be more than 1000 meters thick and can begin less than 200 meters above the surface.**

- **Layers of polluted air aloft can harbor at least 60 to 140 ppb of ozone in addition to ozone precursors.**

- **Layers of polluted air aloft mix with air near the surface as the mixing layer increases in depth between sunrise and mid-to-late-afternoon.**

- **Pollutants that carryover aloft may generate new ozone following sunrise and before fresh emissions mix upwards from the surface.**

Finding #7: Extra traffic on Friday and Saturday nights may inject additional ozone precursors into the air at the surface, but air quality data do not indicate a significant impact of these emissions on ozone formation the following day

- **Traffic volumes are significantly higher on Friday and Saturday nights compared to other nights of the week. The increase is probably limited to light-duty vehicles.**

- **Emissions from excess traffic on Friday and Saturday nights almost certainly are trapped in a layer of air near the surface that forms as the surface cools.**

- **Measured concentrations of CO, VOC's, and NO_X at sunrise on Saturday and Sunday mornings are lower than the corresponding weekday concentrations. Therefore, ozone precursors that carryover under the surface-based inversion on Friday and Saturday nights do not appear to be a significant cause of the ozone weekend effect.**

Finding #8: Some changes from 1994 to 1998 in the hourly patterns of ozone by day-of-week may reflect changes in hydrocarbon (VOC) emissions in the SoCAB

- **Ozone concentrations at many sites in the air basin tended to peak a little later in the day in 1998 than in 1994. This pattern is consistent with lower and less reactive hydrocarbon emissions.**

Finding #9: Concentrations of CO (partial surrogate for VOCs) and NO_X declined along with ozone during the 1990's

Changes in CO were used as a partial surrogate for changes in VOCs or hydrocarbons. This was done because VOC or HC data are not available at most air quality monitoring locations. Analyses of data for CO and NO_X by day-of-week in the 1990's found:

- **Concentrations of CO and NO_X in the SoCAB declined from 1994 to 1998.**
- **Declines in CO were similar on weekdays and weekends from 1994 to 1998.**
- **Declines in NO_X were similar on weekdays and weekends from 1994 to 1998.**
- **A similar analysis based on direct measurements of VOC's was not possible due to limited data.**

Finding #10: With the exception of Saturday afternoon, concentrations of CO and NO_X tend to be lower on weekends compared to weekdays

An analysis of CO and NO_X in eleven sub-regions of Los Angeles and Orange Counties found:

- **Concentrations of both CO and NO_X are lowest on Sunday mornings. Though higher than Sunday, Saturday morning concentrations of CO and NO_X are lower than on weekday mornings.**
- **Concentrations of CO on weekend afternoons, particularly Saturday afternoons, approach the concentrations observed on weekdays.**
- **Concentrations of NO_X on weekend afternoons, particularly Saturday afternoons, approach the concentrations observed on weekdays.**

Finding #11: Ozone-forming photochemistry appears to be more active on weekends compared to weekdays

Analysis of surface data for hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides in the SoCAB indicate that photochemistry is more active in creating ozone on weekends compared to weekdays. The data show:

- **VOC/NO_X ratios are commonly between 4.0 and 9.0.**
- **VOC/NO_X ratios are about 10% to 20% greater on Saturdays and 20% to 40% greater on Sundays compared to weekdays.**
- **The typical VOC/NO_X ratio on Sunday is higher compared to Saturday.**

- **The NO_2/NO ratio is higher for almost all daylight hours on Sunday and Saturday compared to weekdays at almost all locations.**

- **Although NO_2 concentrations are typically lowest on Sundays, the NO_2/NO ratio is highest on Sundays because NO concentrations typically decline proportionally more than NO_2 concentrations decline.**

Finding #12: VOC/NO_X ratios are greater on weekends than weekdays

- **In general, VOC/NO_X ratios calculated using TNMOC from PAMS data range between 4.0 and 9.0. These numbers indicate that ozone-forming chemistry in the SoCAB is likely to be VOC-limited, at least near the surface.**

- **On weekends, VOC/NO_X ratios tend to be 10% to 20% higher on Saturdays and 20 to 40% higher on Sundays compared to the weekday ratios at the same location and for the same period of the day.**

- **Actual hydrocarbon concentrations may be as much as 30% greater than those used to compute VOC/NO_X ratios in this report. This would result in VOC/NO_X ratios that are also 30% greater on all days of the week.**

- **PAMS data indicate possible differences in the VOC composition on weekends compared to weekdays.**

- **The routine NO_X measurements reported by sampling instruments include several nitrogen compounds in addition to NO and NO_2. The composition of the mixture represented by NO_X changes from weekdays to weekends. If based on artifact-free NO_X measurements, ambient VOC/NO_X ratios would be greater than currently indicated.**

Finding #13: Reactivity of hydrocarbons appears to be lower on weekends compared to weekdays

- **A special sampling program in the summers of 1995 and 1996 indicated that the reactivity of the ambient hydrocarbon mixture dropped between 1995 and 1996**

- **Data from the special sampling program also indicate that reactivity is slightly lower on the weekends than on weekdays.**

- **Differences in reactivity on weekends versus weekdays appear to be greater in the afternoon than in the morning.**

Finding #14: Concentrations of particulate matter tend to be lower on weekends compared to weekday

Analyses of PM concentrations for all, or part of, 10 years (1989 – 1998) show:

- **The most abundant components of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ in the SoCAB are ammonium, nitrate, sulfate, and elemental carbon.**
- **Nitrate is the largest single chemical component of PM_{10} (23-26%) and $PM_{2.5}$ (28-40%) in terms of mass in the SoCAB.**
- **SSI samplers reported the lowest average PM_{10} on Sundays at 18 of 19 locations.**
- **Dichot samplers reported the lowest average $PM_{2.5}$ on Sundays at 6 of 9 locations.**
- **Summer PM_{10} concentrations from a TEOM sampler at Azusa averaged 23% lower on Sundays and 19% lower on Saturdays compared to the weekdays, which averaged approximately 62 $\mu g/m^3$.**
- **Some day-of-week comparisons of particulate matter concentrations are difficult to interpret. For example, measured PM_{10}-nitrates in the SoCAB can be lowest on a mid-week day in some locations. No simple explanation in terms of source strengths, atmospheric chemistry, or meteorology is readily available.**
- **In the San Francisco Bay Area, PM_{10} from SSI samplers was lowest on Sunday, followed by Wednesday, and then Saturday. However, these differences did not achieve statistical "significance".**

Finding #15: Concentrations of seven toxic air contaminants are lower or the same on weekends compared to weekdays

Analyses of toxic air contaminant (TAC) concentrations in the SoCAB show:

- **Between 1990 and 1997, the annual average concentration of benzene, a human carcinogen, declined by 70% or more (based on data for five**

sites in the SoCAB – data on compact disk number PTSD-99-012-CD). The comparable decline in the annual average concentration of 1,3-butadiene was 40% or more.

- **Concentrations of three TAC's – benzene, 1,3-butadiene, and perchloroethylene – are notably lower on weekends compared to weekdays. Benzene and 1,3-butadiene are directly emitted pollutants, primarily from motor vehicles. Measured concentrations of these compounds correlate well with observed reductions in motor vehicle traffic on weekends.**

- **Although the concentrations of some TAC's were similar on all days of the week, no TAC demonstrated that higher concentrations should be expected on weekends compared to weekdays.**

Finding #15: Daily traffic counts of heavy-duty and non-heavy-duty vehicles on freeways in the SoCAB vary by day of week

Analyses of daily traffic counts from fourteen of CALTRANS' Weigh-in-Motion stations in and around the SoCAB show the following:

- **In the SoCAB as a whole, the total daily volume of vehicles is lower on weekends compared to weekdays.**

- **Daily volumes of heavy-duty vehicles decrease on weekends <u>throughout</u> the SoCAB.**

- **Daily volumes of cars and other non-heavy-duty vehicles decrease on weekends in most parts of the SoCAB. On entry and exit routes and in areas with strong recreational interest, however, daily volumes of non-heavy-duty traffic may increase on weekends.**

- **Because heavy-duty traffic decreases more than non-heavy-duty traffic on weekends, the ratio of heavy-duty to non-heavy-duty vehicles is substantially lower on weekends compared to weekdays. Estimated proportions of heavy-duty vehicles are 1:20 on weekdays, 1:50 on Saturday, and 1:100 on Sunday.**

- **Among weekdays, Friday had the highest volume of non-heavy-duty traffic at all sites but one. The increase on Friday relative to the mid-week volume was 7% for all sites together.**

Finding #16: In Los Angeles and Orange Counties, hourly traffic counts on freeways vary by day of week

Analyses of hourly traffic counts from hundreds of real-time "loop detectors" on freeways in eleven sub-regions of Los Angeles and Orange counties show the following:

- **Despite sub-regional differences, hourly traffic volumes by day-of-week have similar general characteristics throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties.**

- **The total volume of traffic is substantially different on weekends compared to weekdays in all 11 sub-regions. Saturday and Sunday traffic totals are approximately 89% and 78% of weekday totals.**

- **Saturday traffic volumes are smaller than weekday volumes during the morning and evening commute periods, but equal to or greater than weekday volumes at other times of the day.**

- **Sunday traffic volumes are lower than all other days between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. except for a few mid-day hours in some sub-regions when Sunday volumes reach weekday levels.**

- **In all 11 sub-regions on Friday and Saturday nights, between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., the hourly traffic volumes are 10% to 100% greater than all other nights in the week.**

- **The timing of traffic is dramatically different on weekends compared to weekdays in all 11 sub-regions.**

- **Distinctive "rush-hour" increases in morning and evening traffic during the commute periods occur on weekdays but not on weekends. From 6 a.m. to 8 a.m., Saturday volumes are approximately 50% to 60% less than mid-week volumes and Sunday volumes are approximately 70% to 80% less than mid-week volumes.**

- **The timing of traffic on weekdays and weekends correlates well with observed hourly concentrations of CO and NO_X. Both of these pollutants come primarily from motor vehicles.**

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